

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD MINUTES

March 4, 2009 – 3:00 P.M.

Pre-Council Chambers, Mobile Government Plaza, 205 Government Street

A. CALL TO ORDER

1. The Chair, Bunky Ralph, called the meeting to order at 3:03. Tom Karwinski, Bradford Ladd, Harris Oswalt, Jim Wagoner, and Barja Wilson were in attendance.
2. Tom Karwinski moved to approve the minutes of the February 18, 2009 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.
3. Jim Wagoner moved to approve the mid month COAs granted by Staff. The motion passed unanimously.

B. MID MONTH APPROVALS

1. Applicant: Florida Certified Sign Erectors

- a. Property Address: One South Royal Street
- b. Date of Approval: 02/16/09
- c. Project: Amend sign COA.

2. Applicant: Mike McElmurry

- a. Property Address: 54 South Catherine St.
- b. Date of Approval: 02/12/09
- c. Project: Repair, replace rotten wood to match, repaint existing color scheme.

3. Applicant: Vernon Moore

- a. Property Address: 210 Dexter Avenue
- b. Date of Approval: 02/20/09
- c. Project: Repair rotten wood as necessary with new wood matching existing in profile, dimension and material. Install four soffit vents, painted white. Repaint house in existing color scheme.

4. Applicant: Summers Roofing

- a. Property Address: 221 Dauphin Street
- b. Date of Approval: 02/09/09
- c. Project: Reroof flat roof with TPO (single ply membrane).

5. Applicant: Mobile Housing Board

- a. Property Address: 809 Government St.
- b. Date of Approval:
- c. Project: remove existing tar, roofing and flashing from parapet wall to even out surface; reroof with membrane system per submitted plan; reflash chimneys as necessary; repaint as necessary.

6. Applicant: Baytown Builders

- a. Property Address: 955 Palmetto St.
- b. Date of Approval: 02/09/09
- c. Project: Repaint per existing color scheme, white.

7. Applicant: Forrest Raley

- a. Property Address: 1556 Blair Ave.
- b. Date of Approval: 01/07/09
- c. Project: Work approved: Repair rotten wood as needed, matching the existing in profile, dimension and material. Touch up paint as needed in the previously approved Sherwin Williams color scheme.

8. Applicant: Don Faile

- a. Property Address: 1557 Blair Ave.
- b. Date of Approval: 02/15/09
- c. Project: Remove boards over porch windows. Repair and replace wooden screens, paint to match trim. Repaint eaves and window trim all around in existing colors. Repaint steps and porch rail to match existing.

C. APPLICATIONS

- 1. 024-09: 1217 Government St.
 - a. Applicant: Bobby Young
 - b. Project: Site Approval

Approved as amended. Certified record attached.
- 2. 025-09: 16-22 South Conception St.
 - a. Applicant: Todd Drummond
 - b. Project: Certificate of Occupancy Approval

Approved. Certified record attached.
- 3. 023-09: 412B Dauphin Street
 - a. Applicant: Tilmon Brown
 - b. Project: Certificate of Occupancy Approval

Approved as amended with conditions. Certified record attached.

D. OTHER BUSINESS

- 1. Changes to the ARB Proposed Work Application

The subject of proposed changes to the ARB Work Application met with discussion. The Staff and Board want an application that is easier for both applicants complete and Staff to process. A four page, double-sided proposal was submitted.. The Staff will return to the Board with another proposal that takes into account the recommendations and considerations voiced at the meeting.

- 2. Fence Guideline

Four themes pervaded the Board's discussion of amending the current Fence Guidelines: location, variability, material, and zoning. Corner lot and rear privacy fencing are two recurring proposals that often encompass these concerns. The Board's discussion took these two particular submissions into account when discussing the proposed changes to the Guidelines. The Staff was advised to keep these concerns in mind when revising the Design Guidelines for Mobile's Historic Districts.

APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
CERTIFIED RECORD

024-09-CA: 1217 Government Street
Applicant: Bobby Young / Y.B. East Mobile, LLC
Received: 02/03/09
Meeting: 03/04/09

INTRODUCTION TO THE APPLICATION

Historic District: Oakleigh Garden
Classification: Non-Contributing Property
Zoning: B-4
Project: Renovation; site alterations

BUILDING HISTORY

This non-contributing medical office building was constructed in 1975.

STANDARD OF REVIEW

Section 9 of the Preservation Ordinance states “the Board shall not approve any application proposing a Material Change in Appearance unless it finds the change...will not materially impair the architectural or historic value of the building, the buildings on adjacent sites or in the immediate vicinity, or the general visual character of the district...”

STAFF REPORT

- A. This project involves the renovation of an existing medical office building. Minor changes are being made to the building. The proposed change to the site will redirect visitors to a new entryway located in the rear of the building. The parking lot will be upgraded to reflect the current zoning ordinance.
- B. The Mobile Historic District Guidelines read, in pertinent part, as follows:
 - 1. “Fences should complement the building and not detract from it. Design, scale, placement and materials should be considered along with their relationship to the Historic District. The height of solid fences in historic districts is generally restricted to six feet, however, if a commercial property or multi-family housing adjoins the subject property, an eight foot fence may be considered.
 - 2. Modern paving materials are acceptable in the historic districts. However, it is important that the design, location and materials be compatible with the property. Landscaping can often assist in creating an appropriate setting.
 - 3. Asphalt is inappropriate for walkways.
 - 4. The appearance of parking areas should be minimized through good site planning and design.
 - 5. Ordinances relating to parking and landscaping will be enforced by the City of Mobile Urban Development Department in reviewing requests for parking lots.
 - 6. The size and placement of new windows for additions or alterations should be compatible with the general character of the building.”
- C. Scope of Work:
 - 1. Demolish the following features:
 - a. The existing canopy on east elevation;
 - b. The second story addition in the rear of the building;

- c. Remove asphalt drive from front yard;
 - d. Remove curb cut onto South Georgia from northwest corner of the property.
2. Construct a new porte cochere as illustrated by submitted photo;
 3. Construct an 8' fence along the east property line;
 4. Enclose new generator and trash containers with wood screening, painted to match the off-white building trim;
 5. Clean and repaint building;
 6. Replace windows to match existing in design;
 7. Landscape per submitted site plan;
 8. Install new HVAC units on the roof.
- D. Clarification needed:
1. type of fence along east property line, i.e. shadow box or dog-eared?
 2. paint color?
 3. type of door at new porte cochere?
 4. type of new delivery doors?
 5. what happens to old door at existing porte cochere?
 6. type and material of windows?

STAFF ANALYSIS

Because this is a non-contributing, non-historic building, the applicant may replace the windows with newer windows provided their appearance is in keeping with the existing building and the materials are appropriate for a historic district. Staff would like to know more about the windows, but, otherwise, recommends approval for the proposed window replacement.

Staff also believes that matching the paint color of new stucco columns of the porte cochere and the enclosures around the generators and trash disposal area to the brick, rather than trim, would cause these items to be less obtrusive and therefore more appropriate to the historic district.

Staff also recommends more landscaping along the southern property line a buffer between this property and the nearby residences.

Upon consideration of the above clarifications, Staff recommends approval. Overall, the proposed changes represent an improvement to the site and existing building.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Bernie Heggeman and Gary Cole were present to discuss the application. Mr. Heggeman explained that he meet with neighboring property owners. None of the adjacent owners held any objections to either the renovation or landscape plans. Both Mr. Heggeman and Mr. Coles expressed their intention to accommodate the design proposal to the Staff's recommendations.

BOARD DISCUSSION

The board discussion took place concurrently with the public testimony. After some clarification, the Board accepted the proposed canopy design for the south elevation. The new doors opening off the canopy are to be executed in a bronze color. The proposed rooftop generator and trash containers will be painted off white to complement the building's existing trim. The in-kind replacement of windows was similarly approved. The removal of both the wooden second story addition of the south elevation and the

removal of the asphalt drive off Government Street met with approval. All landscaping and access submissions were deemed appropriate. The Board did call for the use of plantings along the approved 8 foot wooden fence of shadow box design constructed along the site's east elevation.

FINDING OF FACT

Mr. Wagoner moved that, based upon the evidence presented in the application and during the public testimony, the Board finds the facts in the Staff report, amending the facts to include the necessary clarifications.

The motion received a second and was unanimously approved.

DECISION ON THE APPLICATION

Mr. Wagoner moved that, based upon the facts as amended by the Board, the application does not impair the historic integrity of the district or the building and that a Certificate of Appropriateness be issued.

Certificate of Appropriateness Expiration Date: 3/4/2010.

APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS OF RECORD
CERTIFIED RECORD

025-09-CA: 16-22 South Conception St.
Applicant: Todd Drummond / O’Gywnn, LLC
Received: 02/13/09
Meeting: 03/04/09

INTRODUCTION TO THE APPLICATION

Historic District: Lower Dauphin Street
Classification: Contributing
Zoning: B-4
Project: Renovation

BUILDING HISTORY

This two-story masonry commercial building was constructed in 1920.

STANDARD OF REVIEW

Section 9 of the Preservation Ordinance states “the Board shall not approve any application proposing a Material Change in Appearance unless it finds the change...will not materially impair the architectural or historic value of the building, the buildings on adjacent sites or in the immediate vicinity, or the general visual character of the district...”

STAFF REPORT

- A. The current renovation of this building into residences was approved at the September 10, 2007 ARB meeting. The applicants are submitting this application because of changes to the approved plans which were made during the court of construction.
- B. The Lower Dauphin Street Historic District Guidelines and the ARB rules of procedure are pertinent to this application:
 - 1. The Lower Dauphin Street Historic District Guidelines state, in pertinent part
 - a. “These design guidelines seek to encourage restoration/rehabilitation within the downtown area in a manner that will encourage visual harmony and enhance historic integrity.
 - b. These design guidelines seek to encourage restoration/rehabilitation within the downtown area in a manner that will encourage visual harmony and enhance historic integrity.
 - c. Patterns and rhythms create a visual harmony in commercial districts. New construction and alterations should respect the already established streetscape.
 - d. Many upper story windows are placed at the same height above street level, and their sills and lintels frequently align.
 - e. Ornament and Detail are important in defining building facades. A range of decorative motifs is present in the LDSCD and creates visual interest. This variety of ornament is bound together by the consistency of basic building materials.
 - 2. In addition, under the ARB rules of procedure applicants must return to the Board with a new application when changes from previously-approved plans are anticipated. Failure to follow the approved plans may result in a Notice of Violation and the withholding of a Certificate of Occupancy.

3. A comparison between the prior approved plans and the finished renovation of the building reveals the following changes have been made:
 - a. There are three balconies instead of five;
 - b. 2nd floor doors were not installed as planned;
 - c. The canvas awnings will not be installed;
 - d. The dimension of the doors and windows differ from the plans;
 - e. The 1st story, west elevation has remained unstuccoed and the windows are misaligned.

STAFF ANALYSIS

Because the balconies are not historic, the applicant could have constructed several balconies or one contiguous balcony. Though the approval was for several balconies, Staff finds the change from segmented balconies to one contiguous balcony along the corner of the building appropriate. Furthermore, the current configuration of the balconies resulted in fewer 2nd floor doorways. This change is also appropriate because it was not necessary for the historic window openings to be altered, which is preferential to the original plan.

Because the building did not feature awnings historically, the applicant need not install them.

The doors and windows are consistently narrower than they appear on the approved plans. Staff believes this is caused by width of the casings around the doors and windows; however, the plans were not detailed enough to determine whether this was a true departure from the approved plans. In any event, the casings appear wider than they would have been traditionally.

No plans were submitted for the west elevation. Stucco was not applied to the 1st story, west elevation, although the second floor features a stucco exterior. Staff does not find the differences between the exterior of the two stories problematic. The second story is an addition, in part, and was stuccoed to tie in with the rest of the building. The first story was an interior party wall to an adjacent one story masonry structure (no demolished). Leaving this wall unstuccoed reflects its history. However, the second story windows do not align with the first story windows. Since the second story windows were added, the applicant should have made an effort to retain the traditional rhythm of solid to void ratio apparent throughout the south and east elevations.

In conclusion, Staff recommends approval of items B(3)a-c. Staff has no recommendation for items B(3)d-e because the plans submitted were not detailed enough to address these issues in the first place.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Mr. Todd Drummond was present to discuss the application. Much discussion centered upon the west elevation whose plans were originally presented to the Board in an incomplete manner. According to the applicant, the substitution of a series segmented balconies for a continuous balcony came at the request of a potential buyer. Mr. Karwinski then asked why were these and other changes were not submitted to the Board. To this Mr. Drummond acknowledged fault. The Board ultimately found no impairment with the west elevation's balcony configuration. When questioned as to the west elevation's misaligned windows, Mr. Drummond stated that the internal walls and elevator shaft brought about that lack of correspondence in fenestration between the first and second floors.

BOARD DISCUSSION

The board discussion took place concurrently with the public testimony. Mr. Karwinski suggested the use of a transom for the first floor windows. Mr. Ladd asked if the glass balconies were a part of the approved project. Mr. Drummond answered yes.

FINDING OF FACT

Mr. Oswalt moved that, based upon the evidence presented in the application and during the public testimony, the Board finds the facts in the Staff report.

The motion received a second and was unanimously approved.

DECISION ON THE APPLICATION

Mr. Oswalt moved that the application does not impair the historic integrity of the district or the building and that a Certificate of Appropriateness be issued.

Certificate of Appropriateness Expiration Date: 3/4/2010.

APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS OF RECORD
CERTIFIED RECORD

023-09-CA: 412B Dauphin Street
Applicant: Tilmon Brown
Received: 02/04/09; tabled 02/18/09
Meeting: 03/04/09

INTRODUCTION TO THE APPLICATION

Historic District: Lower Dauphin Street
Classification: Non- Contributing
Zoning: B-4
Project: Renovation

BUILDING HISTORY

Located directly behind the Gulf Mattress Factory building at 412 Dauphin Street, this rectangular, masonry warehouse most likely dates to the 1930s or 1940s and was where the mattresses were actually made when the factory was in operation.

STANDARD OF REVIEW

Section 9 of the Preservation Ordinance states “the Board shall not approve any application proposing a Material Change in Appearance unless it finds the change...will not materially impair the architectural or historic value of the building, the buildings on adjacent sites or in the immediate vicinity, or the general visual character of the district...”

STAFF REPORT

A. The current renovation of this building into three condominium units is part of the larger Gulf Mattress Factory redevelopment project. Originally a one-story masonry structure, the warehouse featured a flat roof hidden behind a capped parapet, a large garage opening on the west elevation, and two windows and one door on the south elevation. The north and east elevations were solid brick. In order to convert the warehouse to condominiums, the proposed design entailed raising the roof to 1-1/2 stories to create a steep pitch with gabled ends and cutting a series of openings into the masonry walls to provide access and light to each unit. The applicant first submitted plans to the ARB on May 22, 2006. Two board members disclosed that they had worked on the project, but had no financial interest in the project. The Board raised several issues and tabled the plans. The applicant resubmitted the same plans with a memo addressing the Board’s concerns on June 12, 2006. The plans were approved (with one dissenting vote) and a certificate of appropriateness was issued. The applicant was issued a building permit on June 29, 2006; however, construction did not begin until late spring or early summer 2008. Framing inspections were done by Urban Development during the last week of August, 2008. In order to approve the Certificate of Occupancy, Staff visited the property on January 29, 2009. Staff observed that the building did not correspond to the ARB approved plans. Keeping with ARB rules, Staff issued a temporary Certificate of Occupancy for 30 days and advised the applicant to return to the ARB for approval for the as-built renovation. The applicant returned before the ARB on February 18, 2009. The ARB tabled the application and referred the project to a Design Review Committee. The Design Review Committee met on February 25, 2009. The applicant incorporated suggestions from the Committee meeting and resubmitted the application below.

- B. The Lower Dauphin Street Historic District Guidelines and the ARB rules of procedure are pertinent to this application:
1. The Lower Dauphin Street Historic District Guidelines state, in pertinent part
 - a. “These design guidelines seek to encourage restoration/rehabilitation within the downtown area in a manner that will encourage visual harmony and enhance historic integrity.
 - b. These design guidelines seek to encourage restoration/rehabilitation within the downtown area in a manner that will encourage visual harmony and enhance historic integrity.
 - c. Patterns and rhythms create a visual harmony in commercial districts. New construction and alterations should respect the already established streetscape.
 - d. Many upper story windows are placed at the same height above street level, and their sills and lintels frequently align.
 - e. Ornament and Detail are important in defining building facades. A range of decorative motifs is present in the LDSCD and creates visual interest. This variety of ornament is bound together by the consistency of basic building materials.
 - f. The painting of exterior brick is discouraged.”
 2. In addition, under the ARB rules of procedure applicants must return to the Board with a new application when changes from previously-approved plans are anticipated. Similarly, under the ARB rules of procedure, Staff reviews all substantially complete projects prior to the issuing of a Certificate of Occupancy to determine if the approved plans have been followed. Failure to follow the approved plans may result in a Notice of Violation and the withholding of a Certificate of Occupancy.
- C. The applicant seeks to make alterations to a substantially complete project in order to conform to Mobile’s Historic District Guidelines. The scope of work proposed is as follows:
1. **East Elevation** – Paint existing door the same color as brick body color, per submitted drawing.
 - a. Possibly change paint color of gable top to body Sherwin Williams “Cavern Clay”.
Open for discussion.
 2. **South Elevation** – No changes due to close proximity of Balcony on Main Building.
 3. **North Elevation** – Add faux door unit below existing dormer to add symmetry, per submitted drawing, paint same color as existing doors, Sherwin Williams “Laurel Woods” and add metal wire trellis insert.
 - a. Possibly change paint color of dormer face to body color Sherwin Williams “Laurel Woods”. Open for discussion.
 4. **West Elevation** – Remove existing lower floor door unit, stucco and score to match brick opening. Add stucco elements below each door/window unit above, per submitted drawing. Paint Sherwin Williams “Laurel Wood” to match door/windows above. Add decorative light fixture in each stucco opening.
 - a. Possibly paint over old auto repair signage with Sherwin Williams “Cavern Clay.”
Open for discussion.
 - b. Possibly change paint color of gable top to body Sherwin Williams “Cavern Clay.”
Open for discussion.

STAFF ANALYSIS

Overall, the Design Review Committee explored options which would return symmetry to the building and make certain elements, such as the gables, appear less out of proportion. The above-application incorporated the committee’s suggestions. Staff defers to the Board to evaluate the proposal.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Mr. Tilmon Brown was present to discuss the application. The applicant submitted a third alternative for the east and west elevations which further took into account the recommendations of the Design Review Committee. For the east elevation, the color of the trim was changed to green and the color of the gable to rust. The alternative for the west elevation called for removal of the existing first story door and extension of the eared panels of the second story into the confines of the first. Mr. Brown stated that he was amendable to either retaining or painting the existing sign found between the two panels. The applicant said he intends to paint the face of the gable rust, but he did not plan to include the upper panel which he felt made the gable too busy. Mr. Brown also voiced concern as to the addition of lighting fixtures within the panels basing his apprehension on a dual concern of aesthetics and vandalism.

BOARD DISCUSSION

The board then discussed the project. The gable of the east elevation is to be painted rust. A grid and a faux doorway are to be added and painted the same green as the existing door. This shade of green is to be extended to the whole of the building's fenestration thereby removing the white and lending more cohesiveness to the design. Another faux door and grid are to be added to the north elevation. The wall dormer and its door are to be the approved green. With regard to the west elevation, the gable is to be painted rust. The existing door is to be removed and the opening stuccoed and scored to resemble the painted brick. The first floor is to have two green stucco panels beneath and as extensions of the second story openings. In discussion of the panels, the question of light fixtures arose. Several Board members felt they gave the panels a sense of purpose. Mr. Brown was asked to return with designs for the panel fixtures. The sign was discussed. Opinions differed, but the Board said it could be kept or painted.

Changes Approved:

1. East Elevation – add faux door and grid; paint door and trim a uniform green; paint gable wall face rust
2. North Elevation – add faux door and grid; paint dormer face green;
3. West Elevation – remove existing door; stucco and score wall; add two stucco panels; paint panels green; paint gable wall rust

FINDING OF FACT

Mr. Karwinski moved that, based upon the evidence presented in the application and during the public testimony, the Board finds the facts in the Staff report, amending the facts to reflect the discussion. The motion received a second and was unanimously approved.

DECISION ON THE APPLICATION

Mr. Oswalt moved that, based upon the facts as amended by the Board, the application does not impair the historic integrity of the district and that a Certificate of Appropriateness be issued.

Certificate of Appropriateness Expiration Date: 3/4/2010.